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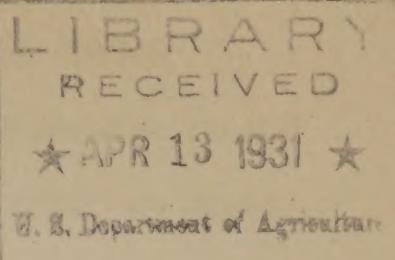
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PROGRESSIVE GARDEN CLUB

Tuesday, March 31, 1931.



ANNOUNCER:- Another month has rolled around, spring is officially here according to the calendar, and the members of the Progressive Garden Club are busy in their gardens. Today, however, they are taking a little time off for their regular monthly meeting, and, as usual, are assembled around the big table discussing their gardening problems.

Just a moment please and we will connect you with their meeting room.

(5 seconds time elapse.)

CHAIRMAN: At our last regular meeting on February 24th, we discussed the making of lawns, the fertilizers to use, the kinds of lawn grasses for the different parts of the country, the planting of trees and shrubbery around our houses, and a number of questions relating to the improvement of our home surroundings. You may recall that at another of our meetings we made plans and discussed the proper grouping and arrangement of shrubbery and ornamental plants around our house foundations, and in borders. We have received hundreds of letters from members of the great Farm and Home audience in which the writers are telling of their own experiences and asking us many questions. Today, we will consider - more or less in detail - a number of points relative to the planting of trees and ornamentals, including evergreens.

(5 seconds pause)

Here comes Mr. and Mrs. Brown. Well! how are you today? Glad to see you, come right up here and have a seat with us at the table. You folks are just in time to help us out.

FARMER BROWN:- We're glad to be here, sorry we were a little late, but we stopped at the nursery to select a few shade trees for planting around our house. Last summer two of our best trees died, the drought had something to do with their dying I guess, so we decided that we had better plant others to take their places. We had a hard time deciding what kinds to plant.. Mrs. Brown is partial to elm trees, but I like oaks because they are so sturdy.

MISS GLASPEY:- What did you decide upon, Mr. Brown?

FARMER BROWN:- We compromised.

MISS GLASPEY:- What do you mean by compromised, selected two or three trees of each kind?

FARMER BROWN:- No, we bought four elms, but I think the nurseryman understood for he threw in a nice oak tree - saying that perhaps I could find a place to plant it.

CHAIRMAN:- If I were planting an avenue of trees, or a border along the roadside, I would plant one kind of tree only, but I like a variety of trees for planting around the house, because the different kinds are more attractive than to have all of one kind. Mr. Brown, will you be so good as to tell us just how you plant your trees?

FARMER BROWN:- Well, to begin with, I have found that it pays to prepare the soil in which you set your trees. If the soil is poor where I want to plant a tree, I first dig a rather large hole then haul enough good soil to completely fill the hole. I do this in the fall or winter when work is slack, then when I come to set my tree all I have to do is to shovel out a part of the soil, set the tree and fill in around its roots.

J. H. BEATTIE:- Is that all? How about trimming the roots, don't you trim off any of the roots?

FARMER BROWN:- No, except where the roots have been cut or broken in digging the tree, then I cut off the broken portion with a sharp knife so as to make a clean cut. I always make it a point to spread the roots out in their natural position just like they grow in the nursery.

MR. PEACOCK:- How deep do you set your trees, Mr. Brown?

FARMER BROWN:- Usually about two inches deeper than they grow in the nursery. It depends somewhat on the kind of tree. Some trees, you know, are naturally rather shallow rooted, while others root deeply. It's always safe to plant just a trifle deeper than the tree formerly grew.

J. H. BEATTIE:- Do you believe in packing the soil firmly around the roots of the tree, Mr. Brown?

FARMER BROWN:- Yes, I do, unless the soil is quite wet. I take great care to see that no air spaces are left, especially right under the center of the tree. I like to plant trees when the soil contains just enough moisture to pack firmly when I trample it around their roots. If the soil is very wet, I scarcely pack it at all.

MR. PEACOCK:- How about trimming trees when you plant them?

FARMER BROWN:- I always trim them some. It all depends on how heavy the top growth of the tree has been in the nursery. I like to thin out the branches and sort of shape the top like I want it to grow, then if the roots have been cut in digging the tree, it will be desirable to reduce the top correspondingly.

J. H. BEATTIE:- When I plant a shade tree in the spring of the year, I always drive three stakes at points about three feet from the base of the tree, and brace it with wires to prevent the wind whipping it about.

FARMER BROWN:- And I always tie a piece of burlap around the trunk of the tree where the wires are attached to protect the trunk.

MR. PEACOCK:- Another method of bracing a newly planted tree is to drive three rather tall stakes around it, but only about 18 inches from the trunk, then brace the tree to the tops of these stakes.

MRS. BROWN:- The wire braces fastened to the stakes at the ground are a nuisance, because you are liable to catch your foot in them and get a hard fall, especially in the dark. I think we will brace our trees to high stakes driven near the trunks.

FARMER BROWN:- There is another point about planting a shade tree that I think should be mentioned. If the weather should be dry during the spring and summer, give the tree a little water from time to time.

J. H. BEATTIE:- How about mulching newly set trees?

FARMER BROWN:- A mulch of straw or leaves will keep the soil from drying out. A mulch of coarse manure is good, and in addition to holding the moisture, the manure adds fertility.

CHAIRMAN:- I want to suggest that when you plant a fine young shade tree that you name it for your favorite statesman or prominent person. Many years ago, we moved to a new home in another State, and, as we planted trees on our place, we named them for prominent people. For example, the two fine oak trees at the entrance, were named for past presidents from our native State. Altogether, we had four trees named for former presidents, and several other trees named for noted people. It is just a little sentiment, but if you name your trees for your friends, or, for prominent people, you will take more interest in your trees. The name gives the tree personality.

MRS. BROWN:- What a splendid idea. I think we will name one of our trees for George Washington.

CHAIRMAN:- That will be appropriate, because next year we celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington. Why not plant a splendid tree and name it for Washington?

MR. PE COCK:- Mr. Brown might name his sturdy oak for our first President.

FARMER BROWN:- That's a good suggestion, and we will plant our memorial tree today.

CHAIRMAN:- The Boy Scouts have gathered thousands of black walnuts from trees growing near the tomb of Washington at Mt. Vernon, and these walnuts have been planted in various parts of the country where conditions are suitable. When the plantings are made, an appropriate ceremony is held, and the plantings are dedicated as memorial trees.

J. H. BEATTIE:- Most people have the idea that trees grow very slowly, but really it is surprising how rapidly they do grow, if planted in good soil. I know a case of a man who built a new house on a hill where it was exposed to the wind. He secured about one hundred little White Pine seedlings about three inches high and planted them on the north and west sides of his yard for a windbreak. Some of the neighbors laughed at him, and said that he and everybody else around there would be dead and gone before those little pines would be large enough to protect his house from the wind.

MISS GLASPEY:- Well, what happened?

J. H. BEATTIE:- Oh! nothing much, only the years went swiftly by, the children grew up and went off to college; the little White pines also grew up, but didn't go off to college, but stayed right on the job to protect the house and the yard from the north wind. Today, those pines are about forty feet high, and form a solid windbreak for the whole place.

MRS. BROWN:- What became of the people who made fun of the men who planted the little White pines?

J. H. BEATTIE:- Oh! they are still around, but they haven't had much to say lately. I have observed that if trees are properly planted and well cared for, it does not take long for them to grow to good size.

MISS GLASPEY:- When is the best time to plant shrubs, spring or fall?

CHAIRMAN:- That depends somewhat on where you are located. In the South, shrubs can be ~~mix~~ planted almost any time during the winter, and during the early spring before the leaves start. In the middle sections they can be planted either in the spring or the fall, but in the more northern sections where freezing is severe during the winter, the shrubs are generally planted in the spring. I refer to the shrubs that shed their leaves and not to the evergreens. Fall planting has the advantage that the soil is usually in better condition to work than in the spring when rains are more frequent.

MR. PEACOCK:- I would like to ask Mr. Brown if he considers it necessary to have shrubs lifted from the nursery with a ball of earth about their roots?

FARMER BROWN:- Yes, when I go to the nursery to buy shrubs, I like to have them dug with plenty of soil. In the case of evergreens, it is absolutely necessary to have a ball of earth kept around their roots.

MR. PEACOCK:- I bought some small evergreens last year and they had apparently been dug without any soil then a ball of mud pressed around their roots. As you know, our summer was dry last year, and I lost most of those evergreens..

J. H. BEATTIE:- I have been growing a few evergreens, and I always dig them from the nursery rows with a good ball of soil around their roots. For digging, I use a spade with a rounded point and work with the back of the spade toward the plant. The soil is scooped away from the plant in small quantities and all around it until finally I work underneath the roots and the plant is loosened with a ball of earth around its roots. Before the plant is moved, I wrap the ball of earth with . . . strips of burlap and tie the burlap in place with string. Then the plant is ready to be moved.

MRS. BROWN:- When evergreens are received from the nursery with the burlap and other packing around their roots, how should they be handled?

CHAIRMAN:- Any outer packing such as straw, marsh hay, or excelsior should be carefully removed. When the holes are dug, and you are ready to set the plants, loosen the burlap and see if the ball of earth remains unbroken, if so, turn back the burlap on all sides, or, cut it away with a sharp knife, and carefully lift the plant with its ball of earth, and set it in the hole, then fill the soil around it, tamping it all around the ball of earth. Be sure to have/hole the right depth, and large enough so that you will have plenty of room to work and to tamp the soil about the ball of earth.

MR. PEACOCK:- In case the ball of earth is broken and loosened, what would you do?

CHAIRMAN:- I would cut a number of slits in the burlap covering, place the plant in the hole and tamp the soil around it, leaving the burlap around the roots. After the hole is partly filled, the burlap can be loosened at the top and turned back or trimmed off. It will rot in a short time anyway, and it does not make much difference if it is removed or not. The string around the stem of the plant should be removed.

MISS GLASPEY:- Should evergreens be watered as soon as they are set?

CHAIRMAN:- By all means, especially if the soil is the least dry, the ball of earth about the roots should be watered, in fact, it is a good idea to water after setting anyway, as the water tends to settle the soil, and make a close contact between the ball of earth and the new soil. Evergreens, by the way, should not be planted until about the time growth starts.

MRS. BROWN:- Would you advise the use of any fertilizer around the roots of evergreens when they are planted?

CHAIRMAN:- A little bone meal will do no harm, especially if the soil is poor. In case the evergreens do not make enough growth they can be fertilized a little each year, however, you do not want them to grow too rapidly.

J. H. BEATTIE:- I find that it helps to mulch the plants with compost, or with litter from the poultry house. The mulch shades the ground and holds the moisture.

MR. PELOCK:- I would like to ask Mr. Brown if he uses any lime on the soil about his evergreens?

MR. BROWN:- I do for the cone-bearing evergreens, but a very little. The broad leaved evergreens such as Rhododendrons, Azaleas, and Laurel require an acid soil, in fact, you must keep the soil acid by mulches of oak leaves, or sawdust, or these plants will not live. Fibrous peat can also be used as a mulch for these plants, as it is quite acid. In case fibrous peat is used as a mulch for the regular evergreens, a little lime should be added to correct the acidity, about a pound of hydrated lime to a bushel of the peat.

MRS. BROWN:- Our Arbor Vitae were injured last summer by some kind of a worm that spun a sort of bag or cocoon over itself. Can anyone tell me what it was and what to do for it? Some of the bags are still hanging on the evergreens.

CHAIRMAN:- That is known as Bagworm. It eats the leaves and lives right inside of the bag that it spins around itself. The bag is usually covered with fragments of the leaves so that it looks very much like the foliage of the plant. Picking the bags and burning them is one of the best remedies. Go over all your evergreens now and remove any of those bags that you may find hanging to the branches. If the bags are destroyed now you will prevent the eggs that they contain from hatching and starting a new breed of worms to eat your evergreens next summer. Spraying the plants during the summer with lead arsenate at the rate of one ounce of the powdered arsenate to two and one-half gallons of water is quite effective and more practical than hand picking.

FARMER BROWN:- Well, we have had very little trouble with insects on our shrubs and ornamental plantings. We keep our premises clean and there are very few hiding places for insects during the winter. We have had some trouble with plant lice on some of our shrubs, but we spray or dust the plants with nicotine to control them. We have enjoyed our shrubbery plantings around our home and Nancy wouldn't buy these if we couldn't get more.

CHALIFIN: Thank you, Mr. Brown. I wish all of our farmers thought as you do. We would have more beautiful farm homes if they did. Now folks - as has been suggested - 1932 is Bi-Centennial Year, in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington. If Washington were to return to life today, he would see many beautiful American homes, but none more quaint or beautiful than his beloved Mt. Vernon. Would it not be a fine thing if every family would plant a tree, or adorn their home surroundings with beautiful plants as a tribute to the memory of Washington.

ANNOUNCER: That, ladies and gentlemen, brings to a close our Progressive Garden Club program for today. Those taking part were Mr. W. R. Boattie as Chairman, Mr. Frank L. Touton as Farmer Brown, Miss Norma Hughes as Mrs. Brown, Miss Rose Glaspey, Mr. J. H. Boattie, and Mr. Walter M. Peacock. For the continuation of our Farm and Home Hour, we now return to Chicago.